



**STATE OF INDIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204

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COMMITTEES:
Natural Resources, Vice Chairman
Public Health
Environmental Affairs
Veterans Affairs and Public Safety

August 1, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioners:

I am a state legislator, representing a district consisting mainly of small communities and rural areas in the Northeast corner of Indiana.

An increasing concern for many of my constituents is their lack of access to broadband communications services. The Internet, as you know, grows more important by the day as a pathway to economic and educational opportunities and vital services. Having to rely on low-speed Internet connections, at a time when most of their fellow Americans are using lightning-fast wired and wireless access, places these Indiana residents at a significant disadvantage.

Wireless broadband, as you know, offers the most practical technology for bringing economically priced high-speed Internet access to regions with low population density. Many small-business owners and other residents of such areas are hoping that the latest wireless networks will soon be extended to serve them.

Following the proposed merger agreement with T-Mobile, AT&T has announced new plans to significantly increase capital spending on wireless broadband network infrastructure deployment if the merger goes into effect and the companies' networks are combined. The new plan calls for offering 4G LTE wireless broadband service within the next seven years to over 97 percent of Americans.

Ubiquitous wireless broadband connectivity would provide a strong incentive for businesses in Indiana to expand, and for new ones to locate here. This would be a catalyst for much-needed economic development and job creation. In addition, as a member of the General Assembly's Public Health Committee, I am very much aware that high-speed connectivity would increase the potential for using telemedicine and enhancing the quality of health care in our area.

To open what would be the quickest and most efficient route to a national wireless broadband network, the Commission should grant AT&T and T-Mobile the permission they seek to go forward with their planned merger.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dick Dodge". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "D" and a cursive "Dick".

Richard "Dick" Dodge
State Representatives
District 51